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Comparative-Religion Notes.

THE time for the holding of the Parliament of Religions in connection with the World's Congress Auxiliary of the Columbian Exposition in Chicago is drawing near. The date set is September 11 to 27; the place, the Hall of Columbus, in the Art Palace, on the Lake Front. Few thoughtful people can contemplate the prospect of this unique gathering without a feeling of intense, almost anxious, interest, mingled with profound gratitude and joy. The scenes will be memorable. The possibilities for good or ill are beyond calculation.

THE committee having in charge the organization of this Parliament consists of eminent representatives of religious bodies of the city of Chicago. Rev. John Henry Barrows, D.D., of the Presbyterian Church, is chairman, and upon him has fallen the major part of the work of arrangement and correspondence. The other members of the committee are as follows: Rt. Rev. Bishop Wm. E. McLaren, D.D., D.C.L., Rev. Prof. David Swing, vice-chairmen; His Grace Archbishop P. A. Feehan, Rev. F. A. Noble, D.D., Rev. Wm. M. Lawrence, D.D., Rev. F. M. Bristol, D.D., Rabbi E. G. Hirsch, Ph.D., Rev. A. J. Canfield, D.D., Rt. Rev. Bishop C. E. Cheney, D.D., Rev. M. Ranseen, Rev. J. Berger, Mr. J. W. Plummer, Rev. J. C. Torgersen, Rev. L. P. Mercer, Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones. "Two years of incessant work," according to Dr. Barrows' statement, have been required to bring the idea within the bounds of reality and assured success. All sorts of obstacles had to be overcome. Christian and non-Christian people, alike looked with some questioning, if not suspicion, upon the principles and motives underlying the conception of such a gathering as well as upon the results which would be likely to come from it.

THE statement sent forth by the committee was calculated to reassure doubting minds. "They desire to accomplish the greatest possible good and to unite all those who believe that such a Congress as has been outlined will promote the best interests of mankind. They desire to deepen the spirit of human brotherhood among the religious men of diverse faiths, to set forth what are deemed the important distinctive truths taught by each religion; to indicate the impregnable foundations of theism and the reasons for man's faith in immortality; to strengthen the forces adverse to materialism; to inquire what light each religion may afford to the others; to furnish an accurate account of the present outlook of religion; to throw all possible light on the solemn problems of the present age, and to bring the nations of the earth into more friendly fellowship."

UP to the present time but two religious bodies have persisted in holding aloof, and have officially signified their unwillingness to sanction the idea of the Parliament of Religion. These are the Church of England, and the Mohammedan Church, of which the Sultan of Turkey is the head. The Archbishop of Canterbury states the position of the former body thus: "The difficulties which I myself feel are not questions of distance and convenience, but rest on the fact that the Christian religion is the one religion. I do not understand how that religion can be regarded as a member of a Parliament of Religions without assuming the equality of the other intended members, and the parity of their position and claims. Beyond this, while I understand how the Christian religion might produce its evidences before any assembly, a 'presentation' of that religion must go far beyond the question of evidences, and must subject to public discussion that faith and devotion which are its characteristics, and which belong to a region too sacred for such treatment."

ON the other hand, the greatest interest and enthusiasm on the subject has been manifested from all sides. It is striking how favorable have been the responses from the Christian missionaries. Rev. George D. Marsh, missionary of the American Board at Philippopolis, Bulgaria, writes of the Parliament: "It is *Christian* in its intent, spirit, and daring. It is *aggressive* Christianity in its readiness to use all means that make for righteousness, peace, and the good of all men. It is *catholic* Christianity in its longing to meet all men and to do them good. It is *apostolic* Christianity in its purpose to 'look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.'" Rev. George T. Candlin, of Tientsin, China, writes: "I am deeply impressed with the momentous consequences of your undertaking, in its relation to Christian missions among the great and ancient faiths of the Orient, and if a thoroughly practical character can be imparted to it, I foresee as its result a great enlightenment of missionary sentiment at home and a grand reform of mission methods on the field, which, once realized, would inaugurate a new era of missionary success and restore the unlimited hope, fervor, and triumph of apostolic days."

THE plans for the Parliament provide for a progressive discussion of great religious themes. A condensed statement of the immense field to be covered will be sufficient to make it clear how valuable these gatherings will be to the student of religion. Sept. 11th, *Addresses of Welcome and Fraternal Fellowship*. Sept. 12th, *God*. Sept. 13th, *Man*. Sept. 14th, *Religion Essentially Characteristic of Humanity*. Sept. 15th, *Systems of Religion*. Sept. 16th, *Sacred Books of the World*. Sept. 17th, *Religion and the Family*. Sept. 18th, *The Religious Leaders of Mankind*. Sept. 19th, *Religion in its Relations to Natural Sciences and to Arts and Letters*. Sept. 20th, *Religion in its Relations to Morals*. Sept. 21st, *Religion and Social Problems*. Sept. 22d, *Religion and Civil Society*. Sept. 23d, *Religion and the Love of Mankind*. Sept. 24th, *The Present Religious Condition of Christendom*. Sept.

25th, *Religious Reunion of Christendom*. Sept. 26th, *The Religious Union of the Whole Human Family*. Sept. 27th, *Elements of Perfect Religion*, as recognized and set forth in the different Historic Faiths. Characteristics of the Ultimate Religion. What is the Center of the Coming Religious Unity of Mankind?

AS THE date approaches for the opening of the Parliament more definite details respecting the attendance and speakers are determined. "Nearly fifteen hundred men, eminent in the realm of religion, have accepted places on the Advisory Council." Among general statements made by the committee concerning the attendance is the following: "The religious world in its great branches will be represented in this truly ecumenical conference. There will be Buddhist scholars, both from Japan and India, and probably also from Siam. One of the high priests of Shintoism is expected to be present. Two Moslem scholars, eminent in India, have accepted invitations. Arrangements are being made to secure papers from orthodox Hindus. The Chinese Government has commissioned a scholar to represent Confucianism. It is expected that Parsees from Bombay will speak of their ancient faith. Jewish Rabbis of Europe and America are in earnest sympathy with this movement. The interest in the Exposition and the approaching Congress will draw to Chicago numerous representatives of the historic religions. Leading Christian missionaries and native Christians of many lands will be present, including some of the foremost men of India. Prominent scholars in America, England and Germany have already accepted invitations to address the Parliament. We are encouraged to hope that the Russian, Armenian and Bulgarian Churches will have representation in the Parliament."

THE BIBLICAL WORLD is enabled, through the kindness of the Chairman of the Committee, to give the names of many of the eminent speakers who will be heard in the Parliament, as well as to announce more definitely than the above general statement, the latest results of the Committee's work.

Count A. Bernstorff, of Berlin, will respond for Germany to the addresses of welcome. Prof. Ganendra Nath Chakrararti, of Allahabad College, a full-blooded, high-caste Brahmin, is about to sail from India to attend the Parliament. He is a great scholar, and a master of English as well as of Sanscrit. Two noble papers on "Hinduism," are written by the famous scholar, Manilal N. Devivedi, of Bombay. The Jains of Bombay have commissioned a representative to attend the Parliament. Mr. Mozoomdar, of Calcutta, will speak for the Brahmo-Somaj. Prize essays on Confucianism and Taoism have been prepared and sent from China. Mr. H. Dharmapala, Secretary of the Buddhist Society of Southern India, will soon sail from Columbo to attend the Parliament. Several eminent Christian natives of India will be present. The delegation of Buddhists from Japan has been increased of late. Hon. Pung Kwang Yu, First Secretary of the Chinese Legation at Washington, is preparing a paper by direction of the Imperial Government of China on "Con-

fucianism." Several Christian Sinologists will be present. The learned Dr. Faber, of Shanghai, is already in Chicago, and will attend the Parliament. Prof. T. W. Rhys-Davids, of the Royal Asiatic Society, has finally sent word that he will be in Chicago during the Parliament, and will speak on "Buddhist Ethics." Prof. E. Hardy, of the University of Freiburg, is also expected. He is to read a paper on "The History and Present State of the Study of Comparative Religion." Mgr. De Harlez, of the University of Louvain, will also speak on Comparative Religion. Dr. Washburn, of Robert College, Constantinople, will speak on "The points of Contact between Christianity and Mohammedanism." Prof. D. G. Lyon, of Harvard, will speak on "Jewish Contributions to Civilization." Several eminent Jewish Rabbis will take part in the Parliament. Among them are: Dr. K. Kohler, Dr. Kohut, Dr. Silverman, Dr. H. Berkowitz and Dr. Wise. Prof. M. S. Terry, of the Garrett Biblical Institute, will read a paper on "The Study of the Sacred Books of the World as Literature." Bishop Dudley, of Kentucky, will speak on "The Historic Christ," and Prof. Fisher, of New Haven, has prepared a noble paper on "Christianity as an Historic Religion." His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons will speak on "The Needs of Humanity as Supplied by the Catholic Religion." Nearly twenty eminent women have been invited to read papers during the seventeen days of the Parliament.

MAGNIFICENT as is the opportunity afforded in this Parliament for all Christian students to come into fellowship with their brethren and with all classes of religious thinkers, and to learn in these few days of conference what it would require months of searching and study to discover, there will be many clergymen and students who will not be able to be present. What is to be done to enable them to enjoy something of the results of the gathering? This question has evidently arrested the attention and occupied the mind of those who have been foremost in this great enterprise and has resulted in one of the most laudable undertakings connected with the entire movement. The plan has been formed to publish the entire proceedings of the Parliament of Religions. A company of representative gentlemen has formed the Parliament Publishing Company of Chicago, and has invited the Rev. Dr. Barrows, Chairman of the Committee on Religious Congresses, to edit these volumes of proceedings. In a circular describing their purposes the publishers speak as follows of the forthcoming work:

"Concisely stated, the two volumes composing this work, will contain, in connection with other matter: Sketches of previous efforts to convene a Parliament of Religions. Plans for such a Parliament and dreams of it, in other lands and ages. A judicious, brisk and pleasing story of the larger and smaller meetings of the Parliament, forming a most valuable and comprehensive, yet attractive, readable and condensed statement of the religious systems of the world as stated by their adherents. Portraits of the speakers in the Parliament, also of many Archbishops, Patriarchs, Bishops, Theological Pro-

fessors, Oriental and other Priests, Missionaries, Religious Editors, Pulpit Orators, etc., from among those most deeply interested in this work, together with sketches of the speakers, and representative scholars from six continents. Hundreds of pictures, grouped and single, of eminent men, councilors, ecclesiastics and divines of all lands, together with pictures of famous temples, churches, sacred fountains, relics, idols and cities noted in the history of religion. Valuable historical data regarding the various religious bodies coöperating in the Parliament. An exhaustive and carefully prepared index which will make the contents of the two volumes immediately available to readers and students. A syllabus of each chapter showing at a glance its contents." Dr. Keane, Rector of the Catholic University at Washington, very aptly says of this work that "it will be a monumental record of one of the most interesting occasions in history, and its omission would be worse than a mistake;" and Dr. George Dana Boardman adds: "The report of the proceedings of the approaching Parliament of Religions would make a publication alike unique in its character and fertile in its suggestions. Such a work would be particularly valuable to the historian, theologian, philanthropist, cosmopolite and the general scholar. It would be a thesaurus of contemporary thought upon the greatest of themes."

In this publication, also, all who are compelled by force of circumstances to remain away from this Parliament will find compensation in the possession of all that type, paper, photography and the other arts can do to make up for the living presence and fellowship of those who will take part in the proceedings. It is one of the most practical of schemes connected with this most unique and impressive of all the ideas and achievements embraced in the Columbian Exposition.